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C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 004131

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/17/2018  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SOCI](#) [KJUS](#) [PTER](#) [CO](#)  
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR BROWNFIELD'S NOVEMBER 10 MEETING WITH  
SUPREME COURT PRESIDENT

Classified By: Political Counselor John S. Creamer  
Reasons: 1.4 (b) and (d)

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SUMMARY  
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¶1. (C) At a November 10 meeting with Supreme Court President Francisco Ricaurte and Criminal Chamber Vice President Julio Socha, the Ambassador expressed the USG's support for a strong and independent judiciary. Socha explained that extradition requests unrelated to narcotrafficking are difficult to approve under the law. The Ambassador said the USG will submit additional requests to extradite Amcit kidnappers and promised to present sound legal arguments to justify those extraditions. Ricaurte requested USG assistance for a modernization program of the Supreme Court. The Ambassador's subsequent comments to the media in support of a strong judiciary received broad coverage. End Summary

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CONTINUED COOPERATION ON EXTRADITIONS  
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¶2. (C) The Ambassador met with the Supreme Court President Francisco Ricaurte and Criminal Chamber Vice President Julio Socha in Ricaurte's offices on November 10. The Ambassador emphasized the important role of the judiciary in a democracy and said his visit was intended to show support for the work of the Supreme Court as an institution.

¶3. (C) Ricaurte said the Court recently denied three extradition requests for kidnapping charges because the law did not support the cases. Socha said extradition cases are easier to approve when there is a narcotrafficking link. The Ambassador said the USG would submit more extradition requests for kidnappers, adding that we would present strong supporting evidence in each case. The Ambassador asked that the Court contemplate the hypothetical case of an American citizen kidnapped in a third country by Colombian nationals. Ricaurte and Socha agreed to consider the legal implications of such a case.

¶4. (C) Ricaurte thanked the USG for supporting the continued participation of former United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC) members who have been extradited to the United States in the Justice and Peace Law process (JPL). The recent hearing with AUC leader Salvatore Mancuso via video teleconference was very positive. The Ambassador reiterated the USG commitment to facilitating access to extradited paramilitaries for Colombian legal authorities and to supporting the JPL process for victims. Ricaurte inquired after the status of two questions recently submitted to the Embassy: 1) a request that extradited AUC members be returned to Colombia after serving their sentences, and 2) a

request for certain assurances on the treatment of extradited Colombians. The Ambassador said he was working closely with Washington on the issue and hoped to have a response soon.

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SUPREME COURT REQUESTS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE  
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¶15. (C) Ricaurte requested USG support for the modernization of the Supreme Court. He said the Colombian Supreme Court must rule on the same number of cases in a week that the U.S. Supreme Court considers in a year. He outlined a need for computers, intranet, and database systems. The Ambassador recommended that the Court develop a clear proposal to share with the Embassy's Justice Sector Reform Program.

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PRESS COVERAGE  
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¶16. (U) The Ambassador's comments to the press following the meeting received wide play on both radio and television. The Ambassador stressed USG support for a strong, independent judiciary and reiterated our commitment to facilitate Colombian access to extradited former AUC leaders to achieve "maximum justice, maximum sanctions, and maximum compensation for the victims."  
BROWNFIELD